Hist 6120: Readings in Medieval History  
MEDIEVAL FRANCE, ca. 950-1350

Fall 2014  
HIS 6120-101 (#43655)  
M 7:00-9:30pm  
Dunbar 4201  
Web: WMU e-learning coursepage

Prof. Robert Berkhofer  
Office: 4424 Friedmann  
Phone: 387-5352 (use email!)  
Hours: MW 11-12

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will examine the history of medieval France, both classic works and cutting-edge scholarship. All regions of France (and some neighboring areas) will be considered, but there will be a chronological focus on the period 950-1350. The course will have an overarching historiographic orientation: how the Annales school has influenced medieval historians in France and beyond. In Fall 2014, the course has three main topical themes:

1) **Power and Lordship:** The rise of new ideas and practices of power following the collapse of the Carolingian order in the tenth century, including topics such as “the crisis of the year 1000,” the so-called “feudal revolution,” and ideas and practices of good/bad lordship.

2) **Capetian Dynasticism:** Tracing the rise of the Capetians and their attempts to establish their rule over the kingdom, including restraining the principalities, connections with the Church, the development of a dynastic ideology, and possibilities for doing research on royal rule.

3) **Women and the Aristocratic Family:** What were the roles of aristocratic women? What were notions of family in the high middle ages? Topics include changes in marriage practice, inheritance, naming patterns, as well as examining aristocratic women in light of the first two course themes.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: This course will prepare doctoral and master’s students doing theses to take research seminars. This course will also help prepare master’s students taking the general option for a medieval field examination. For those interested in medieval studies, this course will also familiarize them with current scholarly debate in medieval history. For non-medieval historians, the course will provide grounding in French schools of historical thought that influence European history. All students will be prepared to pursue further work on medieval social history, the high middle ages, or France.

COURSE FORMAT: The course will be conducted in weekly seminars, which will include extensive discussion, student presentations, and some presentations by the instructor. Discussions will focus on assigned readings and topics for each week. Various written assignments will culminate in a final paper (see below) chosen by the student in consultation with the instructor. Working knowledge of Latin and another European language (preferably French, German, Spanish, Italian) strongly recommended.

REQUIRED BOOKS (all paper unless indicated otherwise):


REQUIRED BOOKS, ctd.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS (for overview in Units I-II, on reserve):

RECOMMENDED BOOKS (on reserve):

REQUIRED ARTICLES: See weekly entries on the reading list below, available digitally.

COURSE FORMAT: The course will be conducted in weekly seminars, which will include extensive discussion, student presentations, as well as some instructor presentations. Various written assignments include a book review, a regional research prospectus, and a final paper. Discussions will focus on assigned readings and topics for each week.

GRADE COMPONENTS: Participation 30%; three book reviews 30%; final paper 40%. You must complete all elements of the course to receive a passing grade. All late submissions will be penalized, in fairness to students who complete the assignments in a timely fashion. The grade scale is as follows: 93-100 = A, 87-92 = BA, 83-86 = B, 77-82 = CB, 73-76 = C, 67-72 = DC, 60-67 = D, and less than 60 = E.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION: Much of your grade will be determined by your efforts in our weekly meetings. To be an effective participant, you will need to complete all readings and assignments prior to class. A class that only meets once per week cannot be skipped, if you wish to receive a satisfactory grade. Attendance is a required part of the course; students consistently failing to attend class without a valid, university-approved written excuse may receive an "E" or an “X” for the course at the instructor's option. Vigorous participation (speaking) as contrasted with mere attendance (being physically present) will count for 20% of the final grade.
BOOK REVIEWS: Students will write three short (3-5 page) analytic book reviews, one due on Sept 29 (concerning the problem of “feudalism”), the other two on any works listed as “recommended readings” under each major course “theme” and due on the date the work is listed. These reviews will count for 30% of the final grade. As part of their reviews of works not read in common, students will also deliver an oral report (approximately 8-10 minutes) on the book they review in class, explaining its content and relevance to the required reading for that week. Students who choose to review a book *not in English* will have that review count as doing two in English. I am willing to discuss possible substitute works for those listed below, but all such works must be approved in advance. The schedule of works to review will be determined during the second week of class, so that students may obtain copies of the works well in advance.

FINAL PAPER: In consultation with the instructor, students will prepare a final paper. The paper may take one of three forms: 1) an historiographic essay (a critical evaluation of the strengths/weaknesses of previous historical approaches to a topic); 2) a "needs and opportunities" paper, which explains possible avenues for future research; 3) advanced students may write a research paper analyzing primary sources (in original or in editions). Every paper will have a bibliography of relevant historical works (if about future research, this will include archival sources, source editions, and research aids). The narrative portion should be 15-20 pages with bibliography as necessary. Students are expected to develop their own topic and bibliography in consultation with Prof. Berkhofer, including submitting a one paragraph description of the topic with a preliminary list of works by Oct 6 and a draft of the bibliography by Nov 10. This paper is due the final day of class, Dec 8, and will count for 40% of the final grade. Students are also responsible for submitting an electronic copy of their final paper readable in MSWord.

HONOR CODE: Students are expected to uphold the Western Michigan University standards of Academic Conduct. You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs that pertain to Academic Honesty. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. [The policies can be found at http://catalog.wmich.edu in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogues.] If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct (osc.wmich.edu). You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with your instructor if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test. Students are required to maintain an electronic copy of all written assignments and must produce it if asked by the instructor. Suspect papers will be submitted electronically to online clearinghouses to prevent fraud in paper composition.

Paper Submission Policy: You are responsible for providing an electronic copy of your final paper in addition to submitting a hard copy (due when you hand it in). This copy must be readable by MSWord.

Students with Disabilities: You should register with Disability Services for Students (269-387-2116 or www.wmich.edu/disabilityservices). You should discuss any accommodation with them and they will give you a card listing the approved accommodation, which you should show to Prof. Berkhofer. This process should be completed by the second week of class.

Late Work: Extensions will be granted only for valid, university-approved written excuses, at the instructor's discretion. Assignments must be turned in as soon as possible after the original due date. Unexcused late papers will be penalized two full letter grades per day they are late (e.g., a "B" paper will become a "D" paper).
Intellectual Property Policy: Students will not reproduce any portion of course materials (including notes on lecture) without the instructor’s express written permission.

**READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Week 1 (Sep 8): Introduction to France and the Annales

*Course Mechanics*

**Thematic Overview: Power, Regions, Aristocratic Women**

*Origins of the Annales School: The Legacy of Bloch, Febvre and Braudel*

*Where was medieval France?*

Reading: read before first class Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society* (entire)


**Unit I: Power and Lordship in France, 900-1200**

Background Reading for Unit: Jean Dunbabin, *France in the Making, 843-1180*. (entire)

Week 2 (Sep 15): The “feudal revolution” model

Georges Duby, *The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined* (entire)


Week 3 (Sep 22): *Mutation féodale?*


Week 4 (Sep 29): *Mutation documentaire?*

Dominique Barthélemy, *The Serf, The Knight, and The Historian* (entire)

Because the French terms of this debate are so important, we will discuss them. Students with good French should read the preface, chs. 1 and 9 (the new English sections) and the original versions of chs.
Readings for Book Review (choose option 1 or 2):


Comparative Book Review (Barthélemy compared with readings 1 or 2) due today.

Week 5 (Oct 6): Beyond France and Beyond Feudalism?


**Topic paragraph for final paper with a preliminary list of works is due today; ideally you should meet with Prof. Berkhofer before this week to discuss options.**

Unit II: Capetian Dynasticism 987-1328

Background Reading for Unit: Elizabeth Hallam and Judith Everard, *Capetian France, 987-1328*.

Week 6 (Oct 13): One Among Many: From Robertians to Capetians

Geoffrey Koziol, *Begging Pardon and Favor* (entire).


Week 7 (Oct 20): Rise of French Royal Power


Week 8 (Oct 27): Making of a Saint-King

Cecelia Gaposchkin, *The Making of Saint Louis* (entire)


**Unit III: Women and the Aristocratic Family in France (1000-1250)**

Week 9 (Nov 3): Early Models of Women and Family


Week 10 (Nov 10): Carolingian Women and the Development of an Aristocracy

Valerie Garver, Woman and Aristocratic Culture in the Carolingian World (Cornell, Nov 2009) (entire)


Draft bibliography for final paper due today.

Week 11 (Nov 17): Women and Kinship

Amy Livingstone, Out of Love for My Kin (entire).


November 20 (Thursday): Lecture by Jonathan Lyon at 5:30pm (plan to attend)

Week 12 (Nov 24): Aristocratic Women, Power and Principalities


Week 13 (Dec 1): Conclusions

Final Paper due today (remember to submit electronic copy also). Prepare to discuss your paper for 5-10 minutes.